

LTRMP Analysis Team Meeting Minutes April 27, 2005
USFWS La Crosse District Office
Onalaska, WI

Welcome and Roll Call – The meeting was chaired by John Sullivan, WDNR. A-Team members Tim Yeager, USFWS, and Fred Kollmann, NRCS, were absent. A listing of attendees is included below.

EMP -FY 06 Budget Update – Roger Perk, USCOE, indicated that there was not much to report on next year's budget. They are expecting EMP to be funded at 18-20M in FY06. This would be similar to what we have seen in the recent past. John Pitlo, IDNR, asked for clarification on how LTRM was funded and how "extra" money would be spent if EMP received appropriations approach the authorized level. Roger indicated the LTRMP receives 33% of EMP funding and any additional money received beyond the Minimal Sustainable Program (MSP) and Additional Program Elements (APE), currently about \$4.6M, would be through funding more APE projects.

A-Team Minutes – Motions were made to accept and approve the minutes from January 24, 2005 conference call. John Sullivan reported that he received a request from Jennie Sauer, UMESC, to provide minutes of the previous A-Team meetings for the A-Team Web site hosted by UMESC. John will identify which minutes are missing and provide them to Jennie.

LTRMP FY 05 Activities/Product Update – Linda Leake, UMESC, provided a copy of second quarter LTRMP milestones to A-Team members. These milestones are also posted on the UMESC Web site (see A-Team Corner). Ten-year reports for vegetation, invertebrate and water quality monitoring components were recently completed. Linda provided hard copy reports to attendees. A limited number of bound copies will be available (contact Linda). UMESC is planning on posting electronic copies of older LTRMP reports on their Web site.

John Sullivan thanked Linda for their efforts in producing these products. John also had a question regarding one of the milestones concerning installing the HNA Query Tool at Field Stations (2005APE19). He wondered how this would benefit river managers. Linda explained that many river managers don't have capability (hardware and software) to run this application. It was hoped that providing the field stations with this software would provide opportunities for the field stations to run this application for their respective managers. The long term goal is to serve up this software in a Web-based GIS format.

Additional Program Elements for FY 06 – Linda described the process for APE development and approval for this year. This was previously presented at the EMPCC meeting in February. The proposed APE projects (37 total) were electronically sent to the A-Team and other program partners on April 22. Linda and Roger requested the A-Team prioritize these projects as high, medium or low and provide this response by May 10th. The Corps and UMESC will also develop their own prioritization. The Corps and UMESC will consider the A-Team's input and their own priorities in identifying a "selected subset" of APEs that will advance for more formal review and evaluation. Linda indicated they would like to have at least 3 reviewers for each of the selected APEs. A-Team members would have an opportunity to provide review comments on specific projects that interest them. A call out for reviewers is planned for June.

Roger indicated that they reserve the right to ask for additional APEs (second call) should they feel that some of the “sideboards” for proposal were not being adequately covered (example: enhanced linkage of LTRMP to HREP). He also indicated that they would expect to fund bathymetry work, LTRMP use/application workshop, equipment refreshment, and finalization of the Status and Trends report with APE dollars in FY 06. These four “add-ons” were not originally included with the initial APE list.

The LTRMP workshop is new and is an item that was raised at the last EMPCC meeting. Roger indicated he wanted to get input from the A-Team on the value of this workshop. John Sullivan mentioned that he suggested this idea at the February EMPCC meeting. The intention of this workshop was to demonstrate how LTRMP data was being used to make management decisions. John Chick, INHS, suggested that the planned International Conference on Rivers and Civilization (June 25-28 2006 in La Crosse) might be an outlet for this activity.

There was consensus that each agency would rate the four additional APEs in a similar fashion to the original 37 APEs. Roger and Linda indicated the following approximate cost to the additional APEs:

APE 38 - Bathymetry – 200K
APE 39 - LTRMP Workshop – 30K
APE 40 - Equipment Refreshment – 57K
APE 41 - Status and Trends Report – 41K

Pete Redmon, EPA, suggested future APE projects should consider an evaluation of LTRMP vs EMAP monitoring efforts. John Chick suggested this review could also be sponsored by EMAP and this has received some consideration from the EMAP planning committee.

Rob Maher, ILDNR, agreed to compile prioritization responses from all A-Team members. The approach will follow the same procedure that was used to prioritize the FY05 APEs. Linda and Roger indicated they would need the A-Team’s collective prioritization response by May 10.

Status & Trends Report

Bob Gaugush, UMESC, provided a handout summarizing the status of this activity. The report will primarily focus on LTRM data with the exception of the hydrology section, which will rely on external sources – flow data. An outline has been prepared and writing assignments have been given to LTRMP principal investigators and others. Bob indicated they may be reducing the number of proposed indicators based on their initial evaluations. Bob will be drafting the hydrology indicator/chapter that will serve as a template for the other indicators. The plans are to use the same software for generating the figures so that it will facilitate publishing the work next year.

John Pitlo suggested that there are other external sources of information that should be considered when discussing the indicator results. Bob agreed and indicated that authors of the report will need to be aware of important historical information to place some perspective on the LTRMP data.

Bob indicated they are on track to have a rough draft completed by September 30th 2005. External reviews will commence after this time. The report will be finalized and released next year.

EMP Strategic Plan

Roger indicated that he has asked the EMP partnership to identify their top priority issues. They will then consider preparing “white papers” or strategic plans on these issues. This activity is important for the COE’s long range planning. There was general consensus from the A-Team that the primary concern was ensuring the LTRMP remains a viable, sustainable program in the future. There was considerable discussion on this and resulted in the following recommendation for EMPCC consideration: LTRMP should be factored into any plans for NESP and that LTRMP be expanded to fill identified gaps in coverage in the UMR system. The recommendation was approved by the A-Team and will be presented to the EMPCC at the May meeting.

Institutional Arrangements

The UMR Science Panel was meeting in an adjacent room during the morning. We invited Ken Bar and Chuck Spitzack, USCOE, to talk about institutional arrangements and Science Panel activities/responsibilities. There was uncertainty on where the A-Team will “fit-in” if the future if Navigation Environmental Sustainability Program (NESP) continues to be authorized or replaces EMP. The A-Team reports to EMPCC, but that group will likely be changing in the future under the proposed institutional arrangement plan.

Linda Leake asked if NESP has considered the LTRMP expertise in data serving and data management. Ken indicated they were starting to consider this. It is likely that UMESC will continue to serve as the “clearing house” of environmental data on the river.

John Sullivan suggested that the USCOE consider asking the A-Team chair or a representative from the A-Team to participate with the Science Panel to facilitate communication and coordination between these two groups.

A-Team Chair

Rob Maher, ILDNR, has agreed to take on the leadership for the A-Team. John Sullivan thanked everyone for their support and help during his tenure. John will be replaced by Jeff Janvrin and indicated that he would likely attend the next meeting or two to help with the transition.

Agency Reports –

Mark Pegg, INHS, reported that he will be leaving to take a position at the University of Nebraska. We will be sorry to see you leave Mark!

Bill Franz, UEPA, indicated that Pete Redmon, is retiring and will be replaced by Bill Franz. Good luck Pete!

Terry Dukershein, WNDR, reported that Gretchen Benjamin, in the new River Unit Leader (replaces Terry Moe).

John Chick, INHS, reported that the Great Rivers Research Center has received a \$1.4 M grant to help with site development. They are still in need of more money to get this center running.

With the conclusion of the agency reports the meeting was adjourned.

A-Team Attendance

John Sullivan, WDNR
Janet Sternburg, MoDOC
Kevin Stauffer, MN
John Pitlo, IA
Mike Steuck, IA
Rob Maher, IL

Pete Redmon, EPA-Retired
Bill Franz, EPA
Jon Duyvejonck, USFWS
Roger Perk, USCOE
Hank DeHaan, USCOE
Sandra Brewer, USCOE
Dan Wilcox, USCOE
T.J. Miller, USCOE
Linda Leake, USGS
Pat Heglund, USGS
Jennie Sauer, USGS
Jeff Houser, USGS

Terry Dukerschein, WDNR
Walt Popp, MNDNR
John Chick, INHS
Mark Pegg, INHS
Matt O'Hara, INHS
Dan Kirby, IADNR
Mike Steuck, IADNR